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Contact: Tambra Stevenson
(202) 482-6274 (work)
Email: tstevenson@mbda.gov

New Orleans College Student Named National Business Plan Competition Winner at 2006 Emerging Business Leader Summit

Atlanta Native Honored by MBDA at its 24th National Minority Enterprise Development Week Awards Gala in Washington, DC

WASHINGTON—The Minority Business Development Agency recognized Aminah Phelps, an Atlanta Native and a student of Xavier University of New Orleans, LA as the winner of the National Business Plan Competition. The competition was part of the Emerging Business Leaders Summit (EBLS) at the 24th National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week conference from August 29- September 2, 2006 in Washington, D.C.

"MBDA is committed to investing in our future by developing youth entrepreneurs," said Ronald N. Langston, National Director of the Minority Business Development Agency, "And Aminah Phelps represents a shining example of our future business and community leaders; America's minority youth must come to realize that economic independence is attainable through business ownership."

Aminah Phelps, a future business owner and creator of AminahDesigns.com was selected on the business plan's appeal to consumers, quality of the product, ability to make a profit, leadership, management style, business knowledge and experience, and its financial strength. As the national winner, she will receive a week-long business executive training program from the University of Virginia Darden School of Business covering management, marketing, finance, and operations.

AminahDesigns.com will be an online provider of high quality, affordable, custom-designed jewelry with over 35 styles of pierced and non-pierced earrings and organic spa products.

The purpose of the Emerging Business Leaders Summit (EBLS) is to expose minority college students to the challenges and opportunities of entrepreneurship. Among those who apply from around the Nation, fifty students are selected to participate in this annual event. Through the EBLS program, the students have the chance to attend action-packed workshops on networking, financing, leadership, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer and commercialization.

Part of the annual National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference, the Emerging Business Leader Summit focuses on introducing entrepreneurship as a career option

for students. The 2006 Conference attracted over 1,100 attendees from throughout the United States. This year's theme, "Mastering the Supply Chain, focused on the challenges and opportunities of domestic and global supply chains. Speakers included the U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez, U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine Chao, GSA Administrator Lurita Doan, SBA Administrator Steve Preston and Dr. Matthew Slaughter of the President's Economic Council of Advisors.

The National MED Week Conference is the largest premiere event for minority businesses held in our Nation's Capital sponsored by the Minority Business Development Agency and a host of public and private sector partners. MED Week, designated by Proclamation of the President of the United States since 1983, honors the achievements of minority-owned business enterprises in America.

For more information on the EBLs, visit www.medweek.gov and/or contact Mr. Carlos Guzman, National Business Development Specialist, at (202) 482-3064 or email him at cguzman@mbda.gov.

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About the Minority Business Development Agency, US Department of Commerce

Founded in 1971 and headquartered in Washington, DC, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. MBDA is the only federal agency created specifically to foster the establishment and growth of minority-owned businesses in this Nation. The Agency actively promotes the growth and competitiveness of large, medium and small minority business enterprises by offering management and technical assistance through a network of forty local business centers throughout the United States. Statistics on minority businesses and resources to build and sustain minority businesses are available at www.mbda.gov.